



DEQ's visit to an Offshore Oil and Gas Platforms to be followed-up by land based technical training

Technical staff from DEQ's Water Permits Division recently visited Century Oil Company's Breton Sound Block 51, an Offshore Oil and Gas Platform in the Gulf of Mexico. The purpose of the visit was to observe the operations of a fully functional platform, view the flow process, discuss the details of the operation with the crew and gather information for use in future permitting activities. The platform was a transfer and sample detection station which received crude oil via underwater pipes from a number of other offshore wells. The platform's operational staff was involved in tests of a newly installed multi-level treatment system to reduce oil and grease levels in incoming produced waste water before it is discharged.

Two samples of incoming produced water were tested using a hand-held water analyzer. The produced water was treated by screen and filtration systems. It was then coalesced and put through another treatment and filtration process. The first sample taken and analyzed during the visit contained 7.6 milligrams per liter of oil and grease. The second sample taken after a filter change contained 2.4 milligrams per liter, thereby indicating the effectiveness of the filtration process. These tests, though preliminary in nature, indicated that the waste water could be treated to reduce effluent levels well below the EPA standard limit for oil and grease, which is 29 milligrams per liter.

"We are excited to be participating in the oil and gas platform visitation and training sessions, as the exposure received by DEQ staff proves invaluable in our mission to protect human health and the environment," said Mitch Mitchell, Administrator of DEQ's Water Permits Division. "Any step taken to reduce the amount of any effluent, to include oil and grease, into our environment is a great boon for the state's ecological landscape. Century Oil's efforts in that regard are to be commended."

DEQ has coordinated additional, follow-on oil and gas instructional training sessions for approximately 15 more DEQ staff members at the Oil and Gas Platform Training Facility in Robert, Louisiana. Training will occur in November of this year and cover all aspects of the daily operations of an offshore oil rig, including information on displays and equipment demonstrations. The training is being coordinated through Louisiana Midcontinent Oil and Gas Association (LMOGA) and will cover both classroom and hands-on sessions in which all technical levels of the oil and gas industry will be taught. Participants will be from DEQ's Water Permits, Enforcement, Inspections and Legal Divisions.

